

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Jason S.C. Hou

Serial No.: 10/812,721

Filed: March 30, 2004

For: SOUND SYSTEM WITH  
DEDICATED VOCAL CHANNEL

Examiner: N/A  
Group Art Unit: 2644

PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL FOR NEW APPLICATION

Mail Stop Petition  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.102(d) and MPEP § 708.02, Applicant respectfully requests that the above-identified application be afforded advancement of examination. The above-identified application has not received any examination by the Examiner.

PRESENTED CLAIMS

Claims 1-27 are directed to a single invention of a sound system with dedicated vocal channel. If the Patent Office determines that all the claims presented are not obviously directed to a single invention, then applicant will make an election without traverse as a prerequisite to the grant of special status.

Applicant's counsel has made a rigid comparison of the prior art with the claims of the application as set forth in the originally filed application and has concluded that Applicant's invention is patentable over the prior art.

### **PRE-EXAMINATION SEARCH**

Applicant has caused to be made a careful and thorough pre-examination search of the prior art by a professional searcher. The field of said search included Class/subclass 434/118, 307 & 84/477, 609, 610, 634, 650. The references revealed by the search are disclosed in the accompanying Information Disclosure Statement.

### **COPY OF REFERENCES**

There is submitted herewith a copy of the references deemed most closely related to the subject matter encompassed by the claims, previously filed with an information disclosure statement with the application on March 30, 2004. The references are United State Patent Nos.: 5,900,566; 5,899,699; 5,811,708; 5,689,081; and 5,804,752.

### **DETAILED DISCUSSION OF THE REFERENCES**

There is submitted herewith a detailed discussion of the references, which discussion particularly points out how the claimed subject matter is distinguishable over the references.

United States Patent 5,900,566

USPN 5,900,566, discloses a karaoke playback apparatus utilizing digital multi-channel broadcasting, wherein broadcast images are displayed on a monitor along with lyrics, while an accompaniment sound is output via the speaker. The karaoke playback apparatus uses: a memory that stores karaoke data; a sound processor for generating an accompaniment sound according to the karaoke data to be output via a speaker; an image processor for controlling display of lyrics contained in the karaoke data via a monitor in synchronism with the accompaniment sound; a receiver of a digital multi-channel television broadcasting for receiving a plurality of channels on which background images for karaoke musical pieces are broadcasted; and a background controller for controlling the receiver. Each of the karaoke musical pieces has an identifier and a predetermined background selector. When a request is made to play back a karaoke musical piece, the background selector of the associated karaoke data is supplied to the background controller to select a channel from the broadcasting on which images associated with that background selector are broadcasted. Those images are displayed on the monitor along with the lyrics, while the accompaniment sound is output via the speaker.

As such, USPN 5,900,566 is not concerned with, and does not disclose: a main channel comprising a mixer device that mixes a singing voice and an accompaniment sound, to generate a mixed output, thereby effecting play of a song; and a vocal channel that receives the singing voice and generates a vocal output, separate from the mixed output, thereby effecting dedicated

output of the singing voice along with the song, according to the present invention. As such, in one example, the present invention provides a sound system that includes a (vocal) channel dedicated to voice output, in addition to a main channel that outputs pre-mixed voice and music. This allows the voice output to be heard clearly with directional presence, without having to compete with the pre-mixed voice and music for sound space. Such limitations are not taught or suggested by USPN 5,900,566.

United States Patent 5,899,699

USPN 5,899,699 is directed to a karaoke network system with endless broadcasting of song data through multiple channels. The karaoke network system includes a central station for serving a plurality of song data pieces. The karaoke network system also includes a karaoke terminal, connected to the central station through a communication network having multiple channels, for selectively receiving one song data piece so as to locally present a desired karaoke song in response to a request. The central station maintains the plurality of song data pieces as multiple groups corresponding to the multiple channels. The central station then transmits each group of the song data pieces successively to the corresponding channel in an endless manner. The karaoke terminal selects one of the channels designated by the request, and picks up one song data piece specified by the same request from the selected channel. As such, the karaoke terminal can present the desired karaoke song according to the picked up song data piece.

As such, according to United States Patent 5,899,699, all voice and music are mixed together, and the mix is output to effect play of a karaoke song. USPN 5,899,699 is not concerned with providing a sound system that includes a (vocal) channel dedicated to voice output, in addition to a main channel that outputs pre-mixed voice and music, thereby allowing the voice output to be heard clearly, without having to compete with the pre-mixed voice and music for sound space. USPN 5,899,699 does not teach or suggest: a main channel comprising a mixer device that mixes a singing voice and an accompaniment sound, to generate a mixed output, thereby effecting play of a song; and a vocal channel that receives the singing voice and generates a vocal output, separate from the mixed output, thereby effecting dedicated output of the singing voice along with the song, according to the present invention.

United States Patent 5,811,708

United States Patent 5,811,708 is directed to a karaoke apparatus with tuning sub vocal aside a main vocal. The karaoke apparatus plays a karaoke song according to song data jointly with a first vocal part and a second vocal part. A generator device processes the song data to produce an orchestral accompaniment sound during the course of play of the karaoke song. A first singing voice is physically sung along the orchestral accompaniment sound to fit with the first vocal part. A second singing voice is physically sung along the orchestral accompaniment sound to support the first singing voice. The first

singing voice may be of a main melody, while the second singing voice may be of a harmony melody or a back chorus. An adjuster device adjusts at least a pitch of the second singing voice so as to fit the second singing voice with the second vocal part. A mixer device mixes the second singing voice from the adjuster device with the first singing voice, together with the orchestral accompaniment sound to thereby effect play of the karaoke song.

As such, according to United States Patent 5,811,708, all voice and music are mixed together, and the mix is output to effect play of the karaoke song. United States Patent 5,811,708 does not teach a sound system that includes a (vocal) channel dedicated to voice output, in addition to a main channel that outputs pre-mixed voice and music, to allow the voice output to be heard clearly without having to compete with the pre-mixed voice and music for sound space. United States Patent 5,811,708 does not teach or suggest: a main channel comprising a mixer device that mixes a singing voice and an accompaniment sound, to generate a mixed output, thereby effecting play of a song; and a vocal channel that receives the singing voice and generates a vocal output, separate from the mixed output, thereby effecting dedicated output of the singing voice along with the song, according to the present invention.

United States Patent 5,689,081

United States Patent 5,689,081 is directed to a broadcast-type network karaoke system that has a supplementary communication channel. A center

station transmits song data, and a plurality of karaoke terminals receive the song data so that each karaoke terminal can provide a karaoke service based on the received song data. The center station broadcasts the song data simultaneously to all of the karaoke terminals, and responds to a request from each karaoke terminal to individually transmit the song data to each karaoke terminal. Each karaoke terminal is capable of receiving the song data broadcasted by the center station. Each karaoke terminal also detects a failure to receive the broadcasted song data, and notifies the center station to re-transmit the song data. The karaoke terminal receives the re-transmitted song data from center station.

As such in United States Patent 5,689,081, there is no teaching that a karaoke terminal includes a sound system that includes a (vocal) channel dedicated to voice output, in addition to a main channel that outputs pre-mixed voice and music, to allow the voice output to be heard clearly without having to compete with the pre-mixed voice and music for sound space, according to the present invention. United States Patent 5,689,081 does not teach or suggest: a main channel comprising a mixer device that mixes a singing voice and an accompaniment sound, to generate a mixed output, thereby effecting play of a song; and a vocal channel that receives the singing voice and generates a vocal output, separate from the mixed output, thereby effecting dedicated output of the singing voice along with the song, according to the present invention.

United States Patent 5,804,752

United States Patent 5,804,752 is directed to a karaoke apparatus with individual scoring of duet singers. An information device provides music information containing accompaniment data, and at least first reference data and second reference data corresponding to a first part and a second part, respectively, of a karaoke music. A generating device generates the karaoke music according to the accompaniment data while a first singer sings the first part along with the karaoke music and a second singer sings the second part along with the karaoke music. A collecting device collects a first singing voice of the first singer and a second singing voice of the second singer during progression of the karaoke music. An extracting device extracts from the collected first singing voice a first music property characteristic to a singing skill of the first singer, and separately extracts from the second singing voice a second music property characteristic to a singing skill of the second singer. A scoring device compares the first music property with the first reference data to evaluate the singing skill of the first singer, and compares the second music property with the second reference data to evaluate the singing skill of the second singer. As such, the singing skill of the first singer and the singing skill of the second singer can be scored individually and independently from one another while the first singing voice and the second singing voice are mixed with each other.

As such, according to United States Patent 5,804,752, all voice and music are mixed together, and the mix is output to effect play of the karaoke



song. United States Patent 5,804,752 does not teach or suggest: a main channel comprising a mixer device that mixes a singing voice and an accompaniment sound, to generate a mixed output, thereby effecting play of a song; and a vocal channel that receives the singing voice and generates a vocal output, separate from the mixed output, thereby effecting dedicated output of the singing voice along with the song, according to the present invention. United States Patent 5,804,752 does not teach a sound system that includes a (vocal) channel dedicated to voice output, in addition to a main channel that outputs pre-mixed voice and music, to allow the voice output to be heard clearly without having to compete with the pre-mixed voice and music for sound space.

### FEE

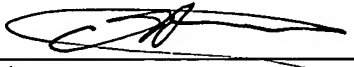
The fee required by 37 C.F.R. 1.17(i) is paid by check in the amount of \$130.00. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees required by this paper or credit any overpayment in the manner authorized above, to deposit account no. 01-1960. A duplicate of this paper is attached for this purpose.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this application be granted special status. Applicant invites the examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney if a telephone conference would facilitate advancement of the examination of this application.

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to: Mail Stop Petitions, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on

Date of Deposit: 3/22/05

by ERIC HOOVER

  
Signature

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